

# Howth & Heybridge Community Conversation

## 21 March 2024, Blythe Heads Hall

Mayor Cheryl Fuller hosted a Community Conversation at the Blythe Heads Hall on Thursday 21 March 2024 where residents of Howth, Heybridge and surrounds enjoyed a light morning tea and an informal chat on local issues.

The conversation opened at 10.06am.

### Council Representatives in attendance:

Cr Cheryl Fuller	Mayor
Cr John Beswick	Deputy Mayor
Cr Garry Carpenter	Councillor
Cr Casey Hiscutt	Councillor
Cr Kate Wylie	Councillor
Barry Omundson	Chief Executive Officer
Chris Clark	Manager Community Development
Mark Wisnewski	Acting Director Infrastructure Services
Samantha Searle	Director Corporate Services
Laura Wiggers	Coordinator Communications and Relationships

### Updates on matters raised at the 2023 Howth and Heybridge Community Conversation:

The following updates have been provided regarding actions from last year's Howth and Heybridge Community Conversation held on 23 March 2023.

<b>Issue:</b>	Lack of signage and dog waste bags at the recreation ground
<b>Council's promise at the last meeting:</b>	Signage on the football ground will be investigated as dogs are prohibited on recreation grounds.
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Director Corporate Services (now under Community, Growth & Development)
<b>Progress:</b>	Dogs are prohibited from sporting grounds under the <i>Dog Control Act 2000</i> . A review of the signage at Heybridge recreation ground was undertaken and as a result, an upgrade of the signage present has been recommended to clearly communicate this regulation to visitors. Subsequently, it has been deemed inappropriate to install dog waste bags in an area where dogs are not permitted. For the convenience of dog owners, waste bags are available at Preservation Bay, where dogs are permitted. This ensures dog owners have appropriate access to waste disposal options while adhering to the regulations in place.

**Issue:** Request for public toilet at the Recreation Ground

**Council's promise at the last meeting:** As part of the design of the new premises for the area, we may look at new toilets that can be entered from the outside and used as public toilets. Tenders were advertised and are currently being assessed and a report will be prepared for the April Council meeting for approval and further steps. It will be constructed as soon as possible with the intent that it will be completed for the 2024 football season.

**Responsibility:** Director Infrastructure Service

**Progress:** The design of the new building allows for external access to the toilets.

**Issue:** Bus access

**Council's promise at the last meeting:** Discussed the potential of moving the playground and bus stop to the community centre area. The bus access may be a problem and will require further investigation.

**Responsibility:** Director Infrastructure Services

**Progress:** Current playground renewal is not identified in the Strategic Asset Management Plan for the next 10 years.

**Issue:** Graffiti removal from River Avenue

**Council's promise at the last meeting:** The graffiti is on the schedule to be removed

**Responsibility:** Director Infrastructure Services

**Progress:** The graffiti on the road was removed, and pole graffiti was reported to TasNetworks

**Issue:** Bus stop and speed limit signs

**Council's promise at the last meeting:** The addition of bus stop signage and speed limit reinforcement signs will be forwarded to the Council's Parking and Traffic Management Committee for consideration.

**Responsibility:** Director Infrastructure Services

**Progress:** Pedestrian warning signage was installed

**Issue:** Hooning and speeding on River Avenue

**Council's promise at the last meeting:** The Council can liaise with Police, and so can residents. The new portable speed cameras can be requested for certain locations.

**Responsibility:** Director Infrastructure Services

**Progress:** River Avenue was added to the list for conducting speed counts to assess the extent of the issue.

**Issue:** Road surfaces (Cuprona Road) are deteriorating

**Council's promise at the last meeting:** To be passed on to our Works Operations area for attention.

**Responsibility:** Director Infrastructure Services

**Progress:** The Council undertook vegetation works opposite houses 39 and 41 and information was passed to TasRail which formed part of their seasonal program in Spring/Summer 2024.

**Issue:** Blackberries and rubbish between Sice Avenue and the railway line

**Council's promise at the last meeting:** The Council is not allowed to work in the rail corridor as per Tasrail rules – we will discuss further with Tasrail.

**Responsibility:** Director Infrastructure Services

**Progress:** No response has been provided by TasRail.

### Talking points from the 2024 Howth and Heybridge Community Conversation:

**Statement** Ian reported that his property was subject to a flood event on 16 March 2022 where stormwater from the road ran off into his house paddock and almost entered the house on two sides. A further two flood events have occurred since, with the last on 16 December 2023. The maintenance of the road appears to be at odds with the best ways to minimise impacts on nearby properties. Ian appreciated that the Council's Manager Works Operations conducted a site visit recently and indicated there would be work done in the future to find a solution.

**Question** Ian reported that there has been an increase in the number and size of the machinery on Albert Road and he believes the speed limit is not appropriate. Would it be possible to reduce the speed limit to 70km/h?

**Response** Mayor Cheryl advised that large vehicles are expected in our rural areas and despite the increase in numbers, there has been no increase to the

amount of money the Council receives from the Heavy Vehicle Tax in 27 years, which limits funds available for maintenance and improvements.

**Council's Promise:** Acting Director Mark advised the Council will undertake a speed limit review and gather evidence to put forward to the state government for a speed limit adjustment.

**Question** Nick spoke about opportunities to reduce climate impact and improve local health and resilience and recommended that community members make use of the Home Energy Assessment toolkit available from the Council. He said a particular issue in Tasmania is people dying prematurely because of heat in houses that are not adequately designed. He was interested to find out what the Council does at a local government level in that regard. Can the Council leverage State Government support for retrofitting older homes for climate impacts? Nick also asked if the Council could work with the Penguin Reseed Centre to encourage people to live healthier and more sustainable lives?

**Response** Mayor Cheryl commented that the extreme temperatures experienced more widely on the mainland and the statistics for people suffering heatstroke in these areas are quite shocking, and over the last summer, we seem to have gotten a taste of these extremes here on the coast. We are certainly battling a mindset that we do not need cooling in Tasmanian homes, and many new buildings are not even adequately built for high temperatures.

Manager Chris advised that this topic is covered in the Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan to an extent, and there may be a chance to identify opportunities to improve community resilience by reducing climate impact as part of this process.

**Council's Promise:** Manager Community Development will make contact with Nick in April, to discuss the Health and Wellbeing Plan and identify opportunities to work with the Reseed Centre to improve community resilience by reducing climate impact.

**Question** Chris asked if the Council would consider a walking overpass across the Bass Highway to allow residents to safely cross the road, as traffic moves very fast through the roundabout and poor driver behaviour is making road crossing very dangerous. This was supported by multiple community members in attendance. MLA Leonie Hiscutt suggested that it might be a good idea to approach the police minister for a road safety blitz.

**Response** Mayor Cheryl stated that the Highway is under State Growth control, and any requests would need to be presented to the department for consideration. The Council's Community Safety Partnership Committee can raise the issue of driver behaviour with the local police representative at the next meeting.

**Council's Promise:** Mayor Cheryl will add driver behaviour in Howth and Heybridge to the May agenda of the Council's Community Safety Partnership Committee.

**Council's Promise:** Mayor Cheryl will write to the Department of State Growth to present the community's concerns and arrange a site visit with the new minister.

**Question** Neita asked if the sandpit can be cleaned up. There is a large amount of dumped garden rubbish and old pallets dumped at the back of the site. This was supported by other community members who also suggested the land could be better utilised. One community member commented that part of the parcel is coastal revegetation space and there had been representation made in the past that there was a preference for this natural space to be retained.

**Response** Mayor Cheryl advised this is Crown land but the question could be put to the Crown as to why it had not been released for alternative management. Acting Director Mark advised he would take the question on notice and follow up with Property Services.

**Council's Promise:** Director Infrastructure Services will contact Property Services in April to advise a clean-up of the site is required and discuss options for the future management of the parcel.

**Question** Neita and Ray both expressed concerns regarding the speed limit on Cuprona Road. Ray advised that he had previously raised the matter with the Department of State Growth and a request for a speed camera was rejected due to the curvature of the road. Can the Council place the VMS trailer out here to highlight the speed limit? Additionally, can 40km/h signs be installed for school traffic as kids have no road sense?

**Response** Mayor Cheryl advised that signs are rarely a good option to prevent poor driver behaviour and excessive signage can lead to sign blindness, exacerbating the problem. Drivers need to be reminded that Tasmanian roads are 50km/h unless otherwise stated. Community members are reminded to contact Tasmania Police to report driver behaviour. It should also be noted that the new facilities at the recreation ground are anticipated to be well utilised and will likely lead to an increase in traffic in the area that is not just local traffic.

**Council's promise:** Acting Director Mark advised speed signs on Cuprona Road will be reviewed and checked for appropriate visibility and location.

**Question** Ray asked if there were any further plans to extend the footpath from Cuprona Road to the Recreation Ground? It is very dangerous for families to walk along the roadway and presents concerns for people with accessibility issues and mobility scooters.

**Response** Mayor Cheryl advised that whilst there was no immediate plan to extend the footpath, there is clearly a need for the community and Council to come together and establish a Community Plan that incorporates the new football clubrooms and facilities, pathways and the surrounding areas. Acting Director Mark added that the playground expires soon and there is potential to move this asset to the recreation ground precinct to build on the sense of a community hub.

**Council promise:** Mayor Cheryl committed to hosting a community event in Howth in the second half of 2024 to gather feedback for a Howth Community Plan.

**Question** A community member stated that while they are a big believer in the FOGO process they have not used their bin because of the smell. Is there a liner available for these bins?

**Response** Mayor Cheryl responded that the current process cannot accommodate liners of any type. Councillor Garry added that there is no long-term solution at this stage, because the liners would need to be completely biodegradable, and even the ones on the market that say they are biodegradable are not 100 percent.

**Council's promise:** Mayor Cheryl will follow up with Dulverton Waste Management to see if they have any plans for liners in the future.

**Question** Dale asked if a reminder about not putting batteries in the waste bins could be sent out on Antenno.

**Response** Councillor Garry advised that Dulverton Waste Management will be developing an education campaign about this to spread the message consistently across all councils.

**Council's Promise:** the Coordinator Communications and Relationships will ensure the Dulverton materials are shared on the Council's platforms when they are made available.

**Question** Neita asked if the flyers for future Community Conversations could include examples of the types of questions that are often raised to encourage people to come along and have their say.

**Response** Mayor Cheryl advised Council is deliberately thinking about ways to build on the message and promote attendance at Community Conversations.

**Statement** Ian noted that it was fantastic to see Councillors and Staff taking part in open conversations and today's session reinforced that the community is encouraged to talk to the Council.

The meeting was closed at 11.42pm.